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### Curnow selected as associate dean of UM's College of Arts and Sciences

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walser/kmr  
9-24-80  
Roundup, Butte,  
Va. City

IMMEDIATELY

## CURNOW SELECTED AS ASSOCIATE DEAN OF UM'S COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

By Lisa Walser  
Um Publications and Media Relations

If you're in Ed's Tackle Shop in Ennis some summer, don't ask the tall woman behind the counter if she would recommend an elk hair caddis or a royal trude for catching Madison River trout. She won't know the answer and she won't guess because she "can't stand people who act in ignorance." You see, Maureen Cheney Curnow only helps out in her husband's fishing shop during the summer.

Now that she's back in Missoula for the school year, Curnow is on firm ground again and doesn't have to worry about "acting in ignorance." She has returned to the University of Montana as the associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. She's not new to the University. Curnow attended UM as an undergraduate and has been a faculty member in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures since 1966. Last year she served as the acting associate dean of the college.

"Going into administration is not an easy choice for a faculty member--it's a whole different situation," Curnow explained. "Faculty members work just as hard, but they do it on more flexible schedules. They have class times and office times, but the rest of the time they can work on class preparation or on research. Administration is a change of framework and availability.

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I like administration even though it's not holy to admit that. If you do a good job in administration, you can save faculty and students a lot of time and do a good job for the University."

A fifth-generation Montanan, Curnow was born in Roundup and lived in Townsend and Helena until she moved out-of-state with her family at age 15. An interest in languages developed and with it a study of other cultures and lifestyles when she traveled to France to attend college. "What interested me in learning French was a kind of different perspective and I firmly maintain that learning a foreign language helps you understand your own culture," she said.

In addition to the University of Montana and the schools in France, she attended the University of Oregon and graduated with high honors in French from the University of Nevada, specializing in medieval studies. She continued her study of languages, receiving a master's and a Ph. D. in French from Vanderbilt University.

In 1965 Curnow was chosen as a Fulbright Scholar and attended the Université de Paris.

Following her travels, nationally and abroad, Curnow returned to Montana to become a UM faculty member.

"One of my goals was to get myself educated enough so that I could do what I wanted to do in Montana," she said. "I always wanted to come back here."

Since returning, Curnow has been active in many aspects of the University community but particularly in promoting higher education for Montana students.

"Being a product of rural Montana, my concern is very much with the education of the students of Montana," she explained.

"Young people in Montana need a cultural perspective. That perspective on the world is extremely important--along with being content with yourself. Montana students have cultural roots that can be encouraged, and they have strong ties to communities, land, families and ethnic groups. You want to give them a view of the world without destroying the foundation of who they are."



One way she has been working to help students is through advising. Curnow was one of the persons who worked to bring back mandatory advising because "we can't help students unless we see them." Mandatory advising is in effect for all undergraduate students who have enrolled in the University since August 1979. In three years all students will be required to speak with an adviser before registering for classes each quarter.

This fall, as part of her associate dean duties, Curnow is responsible for Montana Model United Nations. This program will bring between 250 and 350 Montana high school students to the University. She is in charge of the program, budgets, and speakers and will present the opening address.

She's used to planning and organizing large programs, however. Last year she chaired the Departmental Fair Committee for UM Days--a two-day program in the spring that introduces high school juniors and seniors to the University. Over 500 students visited the campus and attended sample classes, participated in social activities and vied for UM scholarships.

The Departmental Fair is an important segment of the program, bringing representatives together from each academic department so that students can sample department options in one location. Exhibits, literature, films and demonstrations are also scheduled during the fair. She will again chair the UM Departmental Fair this school year.

Along with helping visitors on campus, Curnow works closely with local, state and federal agencies to promote the study of foreign languages and cultures. She has been a consultant to the Missoula City School System Committee on Foreign Languages in the Elementary Schools and currently is working with the Montana Governor's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies. The latter was formed on the basis of a federal commission started by the President to study deterioration of foreign languages and knowledge of other countries.

The UM honors program, which offers selected undergraduate students a more challenging curriculum, is one of Curnow's projects also. "We bring together bright students and give them more special courses and advising so that they go out of the



University at their greatest strength. It's not necessary to send them off to Ivy League schools if you have an honors program.

"So many of those students think they have to go someplace else if they do well in high school. They don't realize that they will often flourish best at one of our state institutions."

Her interest in students is why Curnow stipulates in her new contract that she teach one course each quarter. "It's hard for me not to teach because of the intellectual stimulation between faculty and students. If I didn't teach, I would go cold and I have to maintain my capabilities."

Fall quarter she will teach her speciality--medieval French literature that will be taught entirely in French.

"At any time I would be pleased to go back to teaching and I think I probably will go back in a few years," she said. "Title or prestige does not interest me."

Curnow said one reason she accepted the administration job is that Richard Solberg, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, is extremely easy to work with and cooperative," she said.

As associate dean of the college, Curnow said, "My goal is not to make a lot of changes but to implement those that people are working on. Too many glorious projects are already going on and too much faulty time is being spent in committees."

Curnow has a great interest in faculty development and hopes to use her administrative position to support the faculty. "We are not offering enough encouragement to faculty," she said, "and there are lots of things to be done in faculty development."

Applying for grants and special programs is one way Curnow sees as assisting faculty. Several grant applications which she wrote were accepted last year, allowing faculty members to attend conferences and work on programs that the regular budget would not have covered. She received a year-long grant in 1976-77 from the National Endowment for the Humanities for research on women writers.



CURNOW SELECTED - plus four

This energetic woman comes from a busy family as well. Both her parents attended UM and her father, Dr. Truman Cheney, received a master's degree from the University and is a psychologist. Her mother, Roberta Carkeek Cheney, is a well-known writer who is currently completing the second edition of her popular book on Montana place names.

Curnow's husband, Ed, the owner of the Ennis flyfishing shop, is also a western historian and a consultant for state and federal agencies on western water issues. The Curnows have a son, Jason, 11, and a daughter, Sarina, 3, who will be on campus this fall in the University Pre-School Program.

While "on vacation" this summer, Curnow worked on a book that has been accepted for publication about a medieval French feminist. She also started writing an article requested by Italian Encyclopedia, kept the books at the fishing tackle shop, and helped plan the family's summer reunion.

So it's not hard to believe her when Curnow says, "I'm glad to be back in Missoula; summer is more work than work."